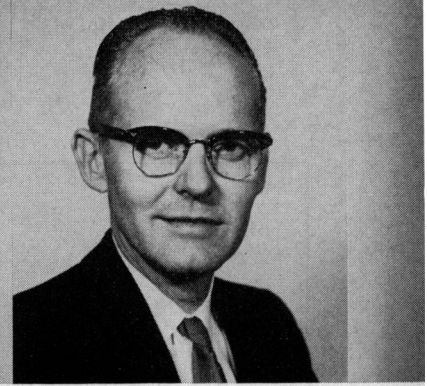


The President's Page



Your Plan for Survival

Nature has made up her mind that what cannot defend itself shall not be defended.

EMERSON: *Courage* 1877

TWO GREAT CATASTROPHES hang over the head of America. One hits the headlines each day—the atomic bomb. It would be more sudden and spectacular. The other is more insidious and stealthy—the loss of personal freedom and individual responsibility. But if it comes it will be just as devastating, costly and tragic.

With each of them there is risk of its occurring in the next year or two. The medical component of the loss of freedom will achieve its greatest threat when Congress convenes this January and massive efforts are made by socialistic planners to pass the King-Anderson compulsory payroll tax Social Security Bill.

Much more is at stake than the medical profession (for it will survive in some form under any system). The freedom of the American citizen to exercise his personal decisions concerning health matters affecting his life is in the balance.

The best defense against such catastrophes is to prevent their occurring. In the matter of socialized medicine legislation, this can be done if physicians will rouse from their complacency, become informed and militant and reveal the dangers to their patients.

Our plan for survival is not passive. Our plan provides the answer to the two great problems extant in the health field: How to help those who do not have adequate finance, and how to help those who have reasonable resources but demand a way to avoid financial disaster from medical expenses. For the first problem, all the honest needs are met by implementing the Kerr-Mill Law (Rattigan in California) that will go into effect January 1, 1962. It

permits local controls, uses matching funds and supplements the truly fine programs and facilities we already have for meeting this need in California. Since it is for the needy, every physician will recognize his traditional obligation and help make it work.

For the second problem, the spectacular growth and future of the numerous voluntary prepayment health programs is the American answer. Such programs are being developed for groups and for individuals, over 65 and under 65 and before retirement and after retirement. Their growth is truly amazing and each physician should know the figures, recognize the facts and brag about them.

With these two problems solved, no unmet need will remain.

As Philip Auld of Britain says, "if . . . your 95 per cent can go united into battle in favour of a workable plan, you can swamp the pro-state minority."

We have our plans. The plans are right.

Understand them. Be able to answer questions. Sell them! Talk to your Congressman, especially if you know him personally. Write to him. Speak to opinion leaders.

Tell your patients!

Remember: This catastrophe can strike only once. It is not reversible. We must not make the fatal error of underestimating our strength. We will win if we recognize we are strong enough to win and we remain united and fight for what is right.

Harold B. Smith M.D.